



# **The Silent Service in World War II: The Story of the U.S. Navy Submarine Force in the Words of the Men Who Lived It**

*Michael Green, Edward Monroe-Jones*

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When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the U.S. Navy had a total of 111 submarines. However, this fleet was not nearly as impressive as the number suggests. It was mostly a collection of aging boats from the late teens and early twenties, with only a few of the newer, more modern Gato-class boats. Fortunately, with the war in Europe was already two years old and friction with Japan ever-increasing, help from what would become known as the Silent Service in the Pacific was on the way: there were 73 of the new fleet submarines under construction.

The Silent Service in World War II tells the story of America's intrepid underwater warriors in the words of the men who lived the war in the Pacific against Japan. The enemy had already begun to deploy advanced boats, but the U.S. was soon able to match them. By 1943 the new Gato-class boats were making a difference, carrying the war not just to the Japanese Imperial Navy, but to the vital merchant fleet that carried the vast array of materiel needed to keep the land of the Rising Sun afloat.

As the war progressed, American success in the Solomons, starting with Guadalcanal, began to constrict the Japanese sea lanes, and operating singly or in wolfpacks they were able to press their attacks on convoys operating beyond the range of our airpower, making daring forays even into the home waters of Japan itself in the quest for ever more elusive targets. Also taking on Japanese warships, as well as rescuing downed airmen (such as the grateful first President Bush), U.S. submarines made an enormous contribution to our war against Japan.

This book takes you through the war as you learn what it was like to serve on submarines in combat, the exhilaration of a successful attack, and the terror of being depth-charged. And aside from enemy action, the sea itself could prove to be an extremely hostile environment as many of these stories attest. From early war patrols in obsolescent, unreliable S-boats to new, modern fleet submarines roving the Pacific, the forty-six stories in this anthology give you a full understanding of what it was like to be a U.S. Navy submariner in combat.

## REVIEWS

“This is a compilation of many stories that originally appeared in the *Polaris Magazine* and is edited by Edward Monroe-Jones (A USSVI Life/Holland Club member and a member of the Bremerton Base) and Michael Green. Although you may have read these stories in the *Polaris*, it is worth the effort to read them again. I suspect that many of the AS readers and USSVI members have never read the *Polaris* so these are all new recollections. The book is designed for submariners and non-submariners alike as there is an excellent glossary at the beginning to define the abbreviations used. There are 46 separate “sea stories” that range from 1940 through 1945. It is an easy enjoyable read which I recommend.”

American Submariner

“..gives the reader a greater understanding of what it was like to be a U.S. Navy submariner in combat ...the

most comprehensive work ever assembled on World War II submarines then or since”  
Naval Historical Foundation

enjoyable collection of good sea tales, with stories that intrigue and capture the imagination...  
The Northern Mariner


...provides a colorful picture of the difficulties these crewmen encountered during the war... This eclectic collection of short reminiscences should help make the wartime experiences of those men available to a wider audience

Journal of America's Military Past

For this history collection, the first-person narratives of WWII veterans who served on S and fleet-type submarines are divided into three chronological sections.... The book includes a glossary of technical terms and submariner slang, as well as background on the features of submarines and a run-down of common misconceptions about submarine life. The b&w historical photos come primarily from the Naval Historical Center and the National Archives, with a few from private collections. The book also includes a two-page b&w map of the Pacific.

ProtoView

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